And Once Again Abu-Dhar

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Introduction

From that day when Muhammad (PBUH) left Mecca after thirteen years of anguish and continuous struggle and went to Medina, he knew that the period of weakness and concealment of Islam had ended and that he must, with the help of his loyal and valiant followers, lay the foundation of a civilisation with the glory of an Islamic organization, and construct the basis of his political regime in the way which God desired.

At this time, to the east of the peninsula, the King of Iran had a splendid palace and sumptuous court in which thousands of female slaves, and thousands of enslaved people and servants, had been appointed to perform the ceremonial duties there, and the product of the labor of the miserable and hard-working people was spent in order to maintain that system.

To the north of Arabia, also, Heraclitus was rising to prominence with his frightening regime and sumptuous empire. It could be said that the things which were the most striking in these two large countries were these palaces which reached towards the sky, for the exclusive enjoyment of the rulers, and that art, literature, war, the collection of taxes, design and invention, were all undertaken so that the royal and imperial ceremonies could be held in the greatest splendor possible.

But as to the Prophet of Islam, as soon as he entered Medina, he built a mosque and his humble house beside it. The door to his house opened from inside the mosque. Until the end of his life, when Islamic rule was established throughout Arabia, he did not change his lifestyle.

He was the absolute ruler of a country and he ate barley bread . He would sit with the poor upon the ground at their meal just like a humble slave. He would ride a donkey bareback and, most of the time, he would sit another person behind him.

This method of ruling by the ruler was to show the difference between his regime and the monarchic regimes of Iran and the Roman Empire. The people could see with their own eyes that a new regime and a young organization had come into being, between two aristocratic bases, in which there was no difference between ruler and ruled, commander and commanded, master and slave, and that all stood in one rank upon the threshold of God and justice.

The founder of this regime passed away and, with the dispossession of 'Ali and political manoeuvres, the first brick in the wall of the Caliphate was laid crooked. Abu Bakr then designated 'Umar as his successor, and the second blow was dealt to the Islamic regime.

Even though 'Umar and Abu Bakr were themselves the cause of this deviation, the political organization of Islam was established upon the basic principles which the Prophet laid down: simplicity, equality, and the fair distribution of wealth and prevention of its concentration, just as it had been previously.

'Umar also left and 'Uthman, this incompetant, pseudo-religious old man, took over the reins of rulership, and the instability which had come into being in the foundation of Islamic rule became so strong that the infrastructure of Muhammad (PBUH) was immediately destroyed. During 'Uthman's rule, the Caliphate was changed into a monarchy and the mud homes of the Islamic

rulers were changed into king's palaces; simplicity changed into the splendid ceremony of the court of Mu'awiyah and the extravagant organization of 'Uthman.

Abu Dharr, who was the fourth or fifth person who joined Islam, and whose sword had been most effective in assisting the progress of the Islamic movement, saw this deviation. 'Ali, the image of piety and truth, became isolated and the enemies of Islam had found their way into the Caliphate organization and, like termites, they were eating away at Islam.

Each of the liberated truth-seekers was driven into a corner and silenced. The day when Abu Bakr pushed Ali aside from the political scene, and he himself sat upon the throne of the Caliphate, Abu Dharr became anxious and terrified. The future of Islam was black, to his mind, and appeared to be frightful, but he still saw that, at any rate, the caravan of Islam still progressed on its main course and even though an important rightful claim was being disregarded, the Islamic system had not been torn apart. Even though he was incensed and boiling with indignation, he put the seal of silence on his lips. When the regime of 'Uthman dominated Islam, the humiliated working masses and the helpless were suppressed under the heels of usurers, slave merchants, the wealthy, and aristocrats who were coming and going in the courts of 'Uthman and Mu'awiyah. Class differences and the concentration of wealth were revived; Islam, threatened with a great danger, was changed from the situation of the Prophet and the simplicity and unpretentiousness of Abu Bakr and 'Umar, who were living like average people or even like the poor and needy. Thousands of dinars were spent to build a Green Palace for the Islamic governor Mu'awiyah and a regime was established which was like a king's court.

Abu Bakr, in order to earn his living, had milked the goats of a Jewish woman, yet now a necklace belonging to the wife of 'Uthman, the Prophet's caliph, was worth a third of the taxes from Africa! 'Umar, because of one horse, took to court a boy who misused his father's position, and his father (who was one of his leading commanders), because they tried to steal a horse by force, whereas 'Uthman had made Marwan Hakam, (that is, a person who the Prophet had exiled), his consultant and had given the district of Khaybar and the taxes from the north of Africa, part and parcel, to him!

Abu Dharr was watching these shameful scenes and because he could no longer bear it, could no longer remain silent, he rebelled, a manly and wonderful rebellion; an uprising which caused rebellion in all the Islamic lands against 'Uthman; an uprising from which the waves of enthusiasm can still be felt until the present day in the situations of human societies. Abu Dharr was trying to develop the economic and political unity of Islam and the regime of 'Uthman was reviving aristocracy. Abu Dharr believed Islam to be the refuge of the helpless, the oppressed and the humiliated people and 'Uthman, the tool of capitalism, was the bastion to preserve the interests of the usurers, the wealthy and the aristocrats.

This struggle between Abu Dharr and 'Uthman began, and Abu Dharr, in the end, lost his life upon this path. Abu Dharr would cry out, "This capital, wealth, gold and silver which you have hoarded must be equally divided among all Muslims. Everyone must share in the others' benefits in the economic and ethical system of Islam, in all blessings of life." But 'Uthman saw Islam in ceremonies, external show and the pretence of piety and sanctity. He did not believe that religion should interfere with the poverty of the majority and the opulence of the minority. Abu Dharr, who had begun the struggle for the development of Islamic equality, would not be pacified and would not let the enemy be pacified, either...

Whenever I think about the wonderful life of Abu Dharr and I see his worship of God, I recall Pascal. Pascal says, "The heart has reasoning powers which the intellect does not attain. The heart bears witness to God's existence, not the intellect; faith comes in this way." Abu Dharr says,

"In this unbounded existence, I have found signs by which I have been guided to God. There is no hope that the intellect will reach His Essence through discussion and analysis because He is greater than any of that, and there is no possibility of encompassing Him." Abu Dharr, just like Pascal, believed in God, knew God through the heart, and he had worshipped God for three years before he met the Prophet.

When he was speaking of capitalism and the hoarding of wealth and he was strongly defending the wretched, and when he was turning against the aristocrats and the palace-dwellers of Damascus and Medina, he resembles an extreme socialist like Proudhon, but the truth is that Abu Dharr is one thing and Pascal and Proudhon are different. Abu Dharr knew God; from that day on, he never stopped upon God's Way; not for a moment did he weaken in thought or action. Neither does Proudhon have the purity, devotion and worship of Abu Dharr, nor does Pascal have his activity and enthusiasm. Abu Dharr had become a complete human being in the School of Islam, and this commentary alone is sufficient to demonstrate his greatness.

It is possible for the following question to arise for many people who are studying Islamic history:- What was the glorious result of this movement, other than a few movements of armies, some military victories and the creation of a great empire which dispersed after a few centuries? What is the difference between the Islamic movement and other political and military movements in history which achieved similar victories and even greater triumphs, particularly when we see that the Islamic movement, from the very first phase, was faced with political differences, and was made to deviate from its main purpose, and that the real leaders of Islam were also aware of this? Then what did Islam do? What results were attained from all those sacrifices and struggles of the Prophet and his God-worshipping, brave followers? If it had military victories, they do not deserve to be considered important in the way we look at religion, in particular since these victories were gained through the Bani Umayyid and Bani 'Abbas sultans and people like them, and did not have a real and direct relationship with the truths of Islam.

This opinion on this point is at least correct in some degree, and we must not conceive this expansionism, these military victories and the Islamic empire's power, to be the goal of Islam, nor believe them to be among the great results of this movement. If we look at Islam in the way in which we must look at religion, this problem will not only be solved, but also we will marvel at the glorious results, progress and victories of Islam.

Religion is the only factor which has a duty towards the universal elevation of creation, obliging humanity to progress and ascend, and just as there was some stimulant that transformed the inanimate into a plant and the plant into an animal and an animal into a human being, so to find completion, religion is also a reason for the continuation of this amazing story of creation, and it also carries the human being to the final stage which he or she must reach, allows the human spirit to fly to the highest summits of the loftiness of gnosis and humanness, and even elevates one beyond that desert and puts one above time and place. Thus one can use this commentary to show that religion is the instigator, stimulant and impetus for the human being to move up the ladder of transformation. In other words, religion is a factory in which the real human being is built and we should expect nothing other than this from religion.

Now we must consider whether or not Islam has been able to attain success in this direction, and offer examples or models of its product to the market of humanity. To study this perplexing issue, one must seek out, on the margins of history, some of the men and women who arose from among the nameless masses, oppressed slaves and the exhausted people. That is, one must search out the names of those very people who History has always been too ashamed to record. History

has most often been kneeling before the splendid palaces of the sultans, in the battlefields and on the threshold of the gods of gold and of coercion. But this time we see that this very aristocracy-worshipper History is going to the worn tents, to the destroyed mud houses of the African slaves, to the nameless, bare-footed people of the Arabian desert, to unknown and unimportant people like Abu Dharr, a man from the Ghifar tribe, Salman, a homeless man from Iran, and Bilal, a cheap slave. History records their lives, one by one, with great greed and envy. With the highest of honors, it offers them to future generations of humanity. And it must also be asked why, and as of when, this pharaoh-seeker, royal court-dweller, History became so humble.

Thus, in order to assess the results which the Islamic movement has achieved, one must not look at the victories in Asia and Africa and in the lands in southern Europe. Rather, one must become aware of the progress that this movement made in the depths of the thoughts, brains, hearts and souls of a limited group of its followers. The victories which Islam had in causing the changes and new directions in the souls of these people appear more splendid, more extensive and more wonderful to those people who place greater value on truth and humanness than on power and extraterrestrial military domination. The Islamic victories in the history of places like Rome and Iran and in the fate of expansionists like Ghengis Khan, Dara, Napoleon, and others like these 'famous brainless', are not exceptional, but restructuring an unknown desert-dweller and half-savage like Jundab ibn Junadah into an Abu Dharr Ghifari is unique in any ideology or movement. If the result of Islam was no more than educating these four or five human beings like Abu Dharr, Salman, Ammar Yasir and Bilal, it would suffice for the intellect to be amazed at the victories of Islam.

But unfortunately the legacies of great men who are considered to be an honor to the history of Islam have been wasted, because the followers of that very religion, who were nurtured by the power of the thoughts and the swords of these people in the world, do not know them, have not understood the highest levels which these models of humanness attained in the chain of transformation, and do not know even brief details of their life stories. With this indifference and apathy to the destruction of the reputations of these rightful pioneers and images of piety and courage, we have struck blows against truth and humanity for which it is difficult to compensate, and all Muslims share in this fault.

More amazing than this is that, in general, people who were considered to be leaders of the Islamic Revolution continued to support truth and even sacrifice themselves for it, during the time of the rule of Abu Bakr and his successor, when Ali, the leader of the Shi'ites, was humiliated and his rightful claim was disregarded. It can be said with certainty that because of their struggles with the regime and because of their efforts, pure Islam was delivered into the hands of History. They helped humanity attain the source of truths and wisdom, in spite of the desires of the hypocrites and the ambitious, because of their struggles and brave resistance to the changes in the Islamic regime.

Abu Dharr is one of these exceptional people, one of those leaders and liberated saviours longed for by mankind today. From the time when the system created a severe crisis in the world of economics, making economics the most sensitive issue of life and the basis of everything, his opinions have found greater importance and today, once again, they recreate those scenes in Damascus and Medina. He who gathered the humiliated and the needy around him, rallying them against usury, money-worshippers, gold gatherers and aristocrats, has now caused the Muslims of the world to listen to his heart-warming words and opinions; his fiery rhetoric. It is as if they see him in distant history with their own eyes; he who gathered the oppressed and wretched in the mosque, rightfully inciting them against the inhabitants of the Green Palace and against the

regime of 'Uthman, cries out, "And there are those who hoard up gold and silver and spend it not in the Way of God... " (9:34).

"O Mu'awiyyah! If you are building this palace with your own money, it is extravagance, and if with the money of the people, it is treason."

"O 'Uthman! You have made the poor, poor and the wealthy, wealthy."

Mashhad, 1334 AH (1955)

Part One

In the prevailing darkness of the night of oppression, the dawn was under the influence of the rising of another sun; the world, in a silence before the storm; and history, in contemplation of a great rebellion against the earthly gods and their shadows and signs the gods of heaven: multitheism.

In the depths of the consciences upon which falls the shadow of 'Divine Will' and in the concealment of primordial natures, which seemingly are related to the essence of being, indescribable and strange changes began to appear, just like the enigmatic sense of scent of wild birds, who perceive a storm's coming and, hurriedly, migrate from their land; or, like the mysterious instinct of alert horses who arise before the occurrence of an earthquake, rend apart the bridle and leave the master's house, saddleless, riderless, heading f or the desert, lonely spirits sense that there is something in the air, something great! Sometimes a person is a world, and sometimes an individual is a society!

And Jundab, the son of Junadah, a bedouin Arab from Ghifar, a poverty stricken tribe from Rabadhah, a wilderness between Makkah and Madinah, along the way of the Quraysh commercial caravans and pilgrimage to the Ka'bah, with brazen men, fearless before customs, rules and laws, and, as a result, in the eyes of one who lives in the refuge of these arrange ments and systems and prospers from its blessings and security, notorious, reckless, evil and ethically corrupt! for ethics here means following customs, obeying laws, and all of these are protecting walls enclosing exclusiveness and privileges: right and rights, order and security and all of this was so that this this man could eat well and enjoy himself at the head of his sumptuous feasts among a group of the hungry.

Ghifar: a notorious tribe; bandits! Bandits of the goods and slaves of the commercial caravans, reckless, who do not even hold the four forbidden months in respect. They also disturb the security ruling the peninsula during these four months. When the commercial caravans, which are in motion between Rome, Makkah and Iran, under the protection of religion during these months of pilgrimage, pass the place of danger of Rabadhah, they once again see the Ghifar, swords above their heads, flying at them from their place of ambush.

The people of Ghifar, these poor, sinful, wicked people, instead of extending their hands like a beggar's bowl to the commercial caravans, offer their swords to the masters !

The son of Junadah is one of these and this is why later when he becomes Abu Dharr, "He is perplexed by a hungry person who has no bread in his house; why does he not arise from among the people, his sword unsheathed and rebel ."

Jundab, the son of Junadah, like every Ghifari man, knows that in a system of tyranny, every law and rule, custom and ethic, order and security is a guard of tyranny, and obeying it, ignorance. But he took a step the last step, going further than any other, he knew that here the ruling religion has such a role, and obeying it, kufr.

And an idol? What is this? One night when the tribe had gone on a pilgrimage to Manat, the Ghifar idol, and with the ardency, happiness, enthusiasm and zealty of praying, worshipping, vowing and need, begging for rain to be saved from famine and drought which threatened the Ghifars with death, he, in the depths of his certainty, sensed the sacred flame of a doubt.

This flame of wisdom was further kindled in the breeze of contemplation and deep and continuous deliberations when the tribe fell asleep; the mysterious silence set up a tent in the environs of Manat, in the wilderness, night and heaven; he quietly arose, picked up a stone, with uncertaintyand, fluctuating between doubt and certainty, went forward; for a moment he remained staring into the eyes of the deity of his time.

He found nothing but two non-seeing eyes; with all of his anger and hatred, he hit this idol, which had been carved by ignorance and tyranny, with the stone.

The sound of stone hitting stone and ... then nothing.Returning in salvation towards the Absolute, being all at once released from the chains, bonds and shackles which seemingly had been wound around his soul for centuries, he suddenly sensed that he had, alone and unknown, left a deep well and a narrow and dark cave in which he had been imprisoned from the beginning of creation. He looked at the wilderness, a shoreless expanse; to the horizons, distant, extensive and heaven! full of glorv, beautiful, deep and mysterious ... it was as if he had seen them, and could see them, for the first time.

Through faith and certainty, he had attained release and a void and now, little by little, new edges of faith and certainty but clear, large, deep, conscious, that which he himself chooses!

Under the rain of thought which incessantly grows stronger and stronger, he sensed that springs open to him in the dark, dry and thirsty inner desert and now, 'the sound of the steps of water!' and every moment, faster and faster; it rises high and higher and acquires all of his inner self; he is filled by it. In the painful inflammation and anguishing ardency of a birth, alone in the world, a shadow alone in the desert, in the night, under the conversant sky of the desert, all of his existence addressed to 'Him!', he suddenly falls upon the dust, head in prostration upon the earth and the sound of impatient, ancient complexes came undone, crying!

And this was the first real prayer of Abu Dharr. "Three years before I met the Prophet of God, I prayed to God."

"To which direction did you turn?"

"To the direction in which He made me aware of Himself."

Three years later he heard that a man had appeared in Makkah who makes fun of the people's religion; who calls the sacred things of the people, 'false'; who names all of the great idols of the Ka'bah, 'mute and foolish stones'; who has placed the One God for the gods of all.

The Ghifar wayfarers and travelers received this news as if it were a tragedy for religion and Arab ethics. They spoke of him with words filled with ridicule and aversion, but Jundab, in the midst, found his lost self.

He knew that whatever the fossil-worshippers, who connect their multitheist, polluted, ignorant superstitions to Abraham, the idol-destroyer, condemn, call kufr, interpret as the cause for: discord in society, the lethargy of beliefs, the deviation of the thoughts of the youth, the boldness of the lowly people of society, the shaking of the base of morality and faith, the cause of the pessimism and separation amidst a boy and a girl and his or her mother and father, the cause of the scorn of nobles, glories and religious personalities, the disappearance of respect for the ancients, the authenticity of early myths and customs of ancestors and grandfathers and ... all are clear signals of a salvation-giving Revolution and firm signs of a Divine truth.

And Jundab, who was from among the pulsating and revolutionary spirits, who does not become hard and stone-like in the narrow moulds of social and heriditary traditions, does not lag behind movement, creativity, ability to change, transformation and the power to choose, sensed there is something in the air; this is exactly what his unlettered spirit and liberated thought sought in the solitude of the desert, in his inner aloneness.

He did not remain indifferent before this 'news'. Responsibility obliged him to begin to search and not to base his persuation and judgment on rumors, propaganda, lies, insults and successive falsifications, which are structured by the self interested elite and are spread by the degenerated populace and he himself to arise and investigate, because a person's judgment is the most outstanding sign of his or her personality. Whosoever judges against a person, a thought, an action, a movement and against every reality, based upon what others have said, and the source of all of their thought and judgment is a person called, 'Mr. So and So Says ... before they ignorantly and unfairly condemn a truth, there are deprived who have condemned themselves to the intellectual bondage of the powers of their age, superstition-making masters and their manifest and hidden propaganda facilities and they have shown that they are the impotent ruminators of rumors, insults and lies which the enemy places a special order for, the hypocrite structures, the demagogue spreads and the populace accepts!

But the son of Junadah sent his brother, Anis, to Makkah to see, at close hand, this man condemned to lying insanity, witchcraft, poetry and kufr, who they say had come to take away the respect of the house of God, to change social unity into conflict and discord and family solidarity into dispersion and hostility, listen to his words, grasp his message and give him [Abu Dharr] a report.

Anis came to Makkah. He did not find the man. No one pointed out this nameless, placeless stranger to him. Hopelessly, he searched through the city. He heard nothing other than abuse, ridicule, aversion and hatred about this man. Every place, mosque, bazaar, and person, in particular, 'respectable people', 'reputable personalities','the big shots of religion and the world' and also 'believing worshippers and religiously prejudiced', 'the believers in Abraham's traditions and the house of Abraham!' repeated similar words and rumors about him, which reached the level of concatenations.

"He is crazy; a magician. The allure of his words is not the magnatism of revelation; it is magic; it is not the beauty of truth, it is poetry; he does not receive his words from Gabriel; his words are not his own either; a foreign scholar intimates what he should say; he gets them from a Christian monk, an Iranian scholar; he is a calamity who has descended upon the ummah of Abraham; he throws the honor of the mosque, the sacredness of the House of God, the tradition of the pilgrimage, the worship of the gods, the genuineness of ethics, the respect of families and all of the honors and values of our ancestors to the winds."

Part Two

Suddenly, all at once, in one of the narrow alleys of Makkah, he saw a large crowd in a corner who had tied themselves into a knot. He delivered himself there: a man alone, with an enlightened face, with a look which awakened the depths of his soul, an open and calm brow, middle-size stature, an aggressive shape, and, at the same time, inspiring kindness and affection, with a manly, hoarse voice, decisive and certain and, at the same time, sweet and full of tenderness, with profound words, a pleasing tone and more beautiful than poetry, full of fear and hope. Anis stood before him. He did not know whether to listen to his words, to give his heart to

his charisma, or to simply observe all of the beauty and kind ness of his stature, look, behavior and words?

He was still in a state of bewilderment, caused by seeing this man, when a group came, creating an uproar. Without listening to his words and answering him, they generated a flood of abuses and repeated, pre-fabricated insults, upon his head and face; and, the ignorance of the unbiased, abased people who had nothing so that they would lose it in 'the illumination of the message' and 'the revolution of the mission', who were themselves condemned by the ruling system and sacrifices of the status quo, had made them into toys of tyranny and jailers of their own prisons, the popular masses, with ugly enthusiasm and sedition, shouted out that which the biased had placed in their mouths.

They pushed the 'lonely Messenger' away with anger or rage or they withdrew from him with abuse and ridicule and left him alone. As he had the tranquility of the tranquility of heaven and the poise of patience, like the patience and poise of a mountain (for he had come down from Hira and had brought a message from heaven), the blows of anger and the darknesses of ignorance had no effect, left no scratch of anger upon his face, which overflowed with tenderness and affection. He would hurriedly go to another place and, amidst another group, his words would begin again, and, once again, not having been heard, not having been understood, abuses and accusations, and again, insults and ridicule, and he, again, to other places and, again, the beginning of his words!

He wandered through all areas of the city, in the street and bazaar, a place of gathering and mosque; he would go everywhere looking for people. He would stand along the way of the people and, without thinking about their answers, would give them fear, would give them glad tidings, warning them of a danger, showing them the way to salvation, for he had a message, for he had a mission, that God, 'the Friend of the honorable' and 'Enemy of the arrogant' had cried out to him, "O thou wrapped up (in a mantle)!

Arise and deliver thy 7warning." (74:1-2); warn people who slumber in the tranquility of ignorance and security of tyranny and who, by shepherding the wolf, graze poverty and humiliation! O appointed shepherd!

Release the sheep of the Qararit desert, for in the city of God, human beings are made into being sheep-like! The God of Abraham made all of his angels prostrate themselves before the feet of Adam, and now, in the house of Abraham, the children of Adam are made to prostrate upon the earth, before the feet of Iblis's fossils which are the protectors of clans and classes.

In spite of the storm of insult, conspiracy, threat and ridicule which the despicable aristocrats raised with their dishonorable and foolish allies to silence him, make him 'not speak', he spoke, saying, "God of the deprived," had said, "Say!" Say, "We Willed to be gracious to those that were deprived upon the earth, and to make them leaders and to make them the heirs. "(28:3) Anis looked at the man, followed him, listened to his words and thought about his existence, a perplexed and wonderous existence, but the wonders of the very being of the man, the gravity of his presence, the charisma of his behavior and his beauty so fascinated and captivated him that he became more of a spectator of the man than his listener:

All of that kindness in all of these difficulties; all of that beauty in all of that stability; all of that serenity in all of that restlessness; all of that simplicity in all of that complexity; all of that servitude in all of that rebellion all of that ardency in all of that anguish; all of that power in all of that weakness; all of that shame in all of that boldness; all of that tranquility in all of that excitement; all of that patience in all of that impatience; all of that humility in all of that awe; all

of that love, inspiration, emotions, finesse and ghazels of feelings and the heart in all of that sagacity, logic, vigilance, seriousness, epics and intellect, and finally, [with] all of that 'to be heavenly' and [with] all of this 'to appear earthly'; all of that worship of God and, head to foot, the enflamed of God, and all of this thinking about people and complete occupation with them and what can I say? All of this aggressiveness and certainty and all of this ... and alone.

A man, this miracle, who threw such a hue and cry into Anis so that he did not hear his words, or he heard, but the wonder of his words and the miracle of his tone caused such a state of wonder to appear in him, for he was hearing the Words of God for the first time, that he was unable to understand their meaning; Anis the brother of Jundab, a young bedouin, 'did not know' what the man was saying, but through his strong instincts, through the clear, primordial nature of a 'bedouin spirit', 'a primordial person' in whom 'logic' had not as yet replaced 'conscience', he found that the man is an 'event'. He realized, through his senses, that these words have come from another world; he did not understand the truth; he did not comprehend the meaning of the words; he did not come to know the man; but he smelled the perfume of revelation, tasted the taste of the truth and sensed the indescribable warmth of faith.

And Abu Dharr, resdess in the desert, anxiously awaiting the road from Makkah. "Anis, my brother, did you see him? Did you hear his words? What was he saying? Who was he?" "He was a man alone. His tribe distressed him and showed animosity but, patient and kind; whenever a crowd rejected him or they left him with abuse and ridicule, he would move towards another group and he would again begin to speak."

"Tell me, Anis! Tell me what he said. What did he invite people to?" "I swear by God, however much I tried to understand what he was saying, I did not understand, but his words were like nectar which ran through my soul!"

Abu Dharr, in searching for the message, did not have scholarly curiosity or the diversion of an intellectual. He was restless and thirsty and Anis had not brought even one drop of water from that spring for him. He hurriedly arose, and, without sitting and reflecting for a moment on the whys and wherefores of the journey and its outcome, he undertook the long way from the Ghifar land to Makkah. Throughout the way, the traveler, the journey, the route of the journey and the final station, were all 'him'.

He was going and faith was coming. Yea. Faith comes in this way. Then he reached Makkah. A man from the Ghifar tribe, amidst the Quraysh caravan leaders and capitalists! and searching for a man, even the mentioning of the name of whom is a crime in this city. He searched the whole day through the valleys of Makkah, the bazaar and the Masjid al-Haram. He found nothing. He went to sleep that night in the Masjid al-Hararn, alone and hungry, when 'Ali, who, every night before going home, would come to the mosque and circumambulate [in accordance with the traditions of Abraham] and then go to his home, saw him alone, asleep upon the dust.

"You appear to be a stranger! "

He took him to his home and, without exchanging any other words, Abu Dharr, slept there. What design does destiny project! This house, this is the house of the Prophet, because 'Ali, at this time, is a young boy, who lives in the Prophet's house. The first events in this journey which determine Abu Dharr's fate and he, for the first time, comes from the wilderness to Islam, are these: the first person who spoke to him in Makkah is 'Ali; the first house in which he sleeps is

the house of Muhammad; the first person who takes him from his unfamiliarity and his solitude in the city to the house of the Prophet is again 'Ali. And these first encounters and first events which give form to the total life of Abu Dharr and remain with his total being until his death.

And the next morning, in search of Muhammad, he leaves Muhammad's house. The day, without results, becomes night and, at night, again 'Ali, who comes for the circumambulation, takes him home and, again, the next morning and the next night and this time on the third night, 'Ali adds a word to his short and repeated question of each night, "Has the time not come for you to give your name and say why you have come to this city?"

Abu Dharr cautiously tells 'Ali his secret, "I have heard that in this city, a man has appeared and ..." A ray of a smile, from ardor and happiness, alights upon the face of young 'Ali. In a tone full of kindness and familiarity, he speaks to him about Muhammad. He arranges with him, "Tonight I will take you to his hiding place. I will move ahead. You follow at a distance. If I see a spy, I will move towards the wall and I will bend down over my shoes as if I am tying them. You realize what's going on and, without paying any attention to me, pass by and continue on your way. When the danger is over, I will catch up with you."

These are the difficult days of the Prophet. The town is completely threats and danger. The enemy, one front, and friends, only three people! and tonight, Islam will find the fourth Muslim.

Muhammad is in the home of Arqam ibn Abi Arqam, on the Safa hill, several steps from Masa'. In the fearful darkness of night, the young son of Abi Talib, in the front, and the son of Junadah Ghifari, behind him, they climb Safa, towards Muhammad. This sight seems to be like a beautiful scene that embodies their destiny, a fate which will soon begin. Step by step, he grows closer and inflammation, breath by breath, more restless; faith and certainty have conquered him. He will not go until he sees the man who claims to be a Prophet, knows him and tests him. He has an appoint ment to see his heart's beloved and his faith's desire. Now he is a few steps from the home of Arqam.

What difficult moments! Bearing the first moments of the visit is grave. Love had captured Jundab. The son of Junadah was filled with 'him'. There is more Muhammad in him than himself. The son of Junadah is no more than a far distant and forgotten memory in the mind of Jundab.

His heart has been placed in the magnetic field of a powerful force. Every moment a familiar aroma quickens his sense of smell, and at this very moment, he senses the gravity of Muhammad's existence with all of his being. His presence fills the area around Safa. Jundab knows who Muhammad is. He knows what he is saying but...what is he like? His face? His form? His way of speaking? His existence? How can he look at him? How can he speak to him? What can he say to him? What will be? What will happen?

"Salam 'alayk."

"Alayka salam wa rahmatullah."

And these are the first greetings offered in Islam.

We do not know how long this visit took. Even if history had told us, we would not know, for at these moments, time does not work. That which we know is that the son of Junadah descended into the house of Arqam and was lost there. No one knows where he went. He never left the house of Arqam. Jundab ibn Junadah left and suddenly, beside the Ka'bah, upon the summit of Safa, from the hiding place of revelation, the morning horizon of Islam, a visage arose, kindled by the dawn, it stopped for a moment.

With two eyes which were filled with the flame of the fire of the desert, he hurriedly turned upon the mountainous walls of the valley of Makkah and held his look upon the idols of the Ka'bah.

Part Three

These stupid statues have all guaranteed the satanic seeking of exclusivenesses for their 'carver-worshippers'. It is the first time that Abu Dharr sees like this and, with wonder and anger, asks himself, "What are these three hundred and some multitheistic idols doing in the mono theistic house of Abraham?"

He hurriedly descends from Safa, a migrant, alone, enflamed and determined. It seemed as if he was Muhammad who was enflamed that night arising from the first flame of revelation, leaving the cave, descending from Hira; or he was like a stone, which an earthquake grinds out of a mountain, falling upon the deep valley of Makkah, upon the heads of multitheism, hypocrisy, humiliation and sleep.

Islam is still hidden in the house of Arqam. This house is the whole world of Islarn and the ummah, with the coming of Abu Dharr, became four persons. The condition of dissimulation, taqiyah,* rules the struggle. He has been requested to leave Makkah, without hesitation, to return to the Ghifar and to await the command. But the bony breast of this 'child of the wilderness' is weaker than to be able to hide such a fire within himself. Abu Dharr, whose tall, thin body is a minaret for the temple of his faith, who is nothing other than the throat of a cry, and his shape, with his burning heart and in submission to the expansive desert, seemingly full of rebellion, was suddenly congealed and became Abu Dharr, is not capable of dissimulation; is rebellion itself, such a situation requires ability and he is unable. "God charges no soul save to its capacity." (2:286)

In front of the Ka'bah, face to face with frightful idols, beside the Dar al-Naduh, the Quraysh senate, he stands and shouts out the cry of monotheism; he announces his belief in the mission of Muhammad; he calls the idols 'mute stones which thef themselves had carved'.

And this was the first cry which Islam brought; the first time that a Muslim rebelled against multitheism. The answer of multitheism was clear, death! a death which will be a lesson for others. This first throat of a cry must be cut off. Without hesitation, they fell upon him and pounded his head, face, breast and sides in fury until they cut off his 'kufr-like' cries.

'Abbas came. The uncle of the Prophet, who was a usury collector and of the same class as the Quraysh aristocrats and multitheistic capitalists, frightened them saying, "This man is from the Ghifar. If you kill him, the Ghifar swords will take out their revenge against your caravans!"

They must decide between their religion and their world, deity or goods? A qiblah of love or caravan of money. Which?

They pulled back without hesitation. Abu Dharr, like a statue, polluted with blood and broken, in the center of a circle of a crowd which, frightened, look at their only captive, with difficulty, tries to arise. The diameter of the circle grows larger. He arises. He supports himself on his own two feet. The crowd becomes more dense; it is as if they seek refuge in each other. It is here that coercion fears faith. He is one visage and they are visageless, personality-less, all alone and all without identity, an abundance of herds and confronting them, a human being, a person; a person

who faith gave meaning, substance, ideals, orientatation, attack and a wonderful, miracle-like, defeatless power which martyrdom grants to a believer.

He took off. He pulled himself to the Zamzam well. He washed his injuries. He cleansed away his b'lood. On the morrow he returned to the scene and once again he went to the edge of death. 'Abbas came and introduced him, "He is from the Ghifartribe ..." and again on the morrow. Until the Prophet, not this time to preserve the life of Abu Dharr, but with a command, moved this restless rebel from the city of suffocation and danger and assigned him the task of inviting the Ghifar tribe [to Islam]. Abu Dharr brought his family and, little by little, all of his tribe to Islam. He was with the Ghifar when the Muslims passed through the difficulties of the srruggle in Makkah, when they undertook the migration and, when in Madinah, they moved from the stage of individualization to the stage of founding a social system and, as a consequence, wars began.

It is here that Abu Dharr senses that he should be on the scene, goes to Madinah and there, as he has no place or work, he makes the Prophet's mosque his home, which at that time was the home of the people and he joins the Saffah Companions. He sacrifices living for ideology. In serving the movement, in times of peace, thought, knowledge and prayer and, in times of war, wars.

Islam, under the leadership of the Prophet, saturates all of the human needs and social desires of Abu Dharr; Islam, based in monotheism, opened the gate of struggle, one side of which is God, equality, religion, bread, love and power, and, on the other side, the arrogant, despotic tyrant, discrimination, kufr and hunger, and, its religion which requires weakness and disgrace. Islam, for the first time, put an end to the fairy-tale of the plundering oppressors who had made the slogan of 'to want either this world or the next', the faith of the people, so that 'the next world' would be for the people and 'this world' for themselves, and, in this way, they grant divine sanctity to poverty.

In this inhuman perception, Islam brought a real Revolution into being which said, "Poverty is kufr." "Whosoever does not have a livelihood, will not be saved." "Divine grace, great wealth [for society], goodnesses and virtue are part of material life and 'bread' is the infrastructure to worshipping God." "Poverty, humiliation and weakness, and with all of these, religion, spirituality and piety in one society?" It is a lie!

It is because of this that the Prophet of Abu Dharr is an armed Prophet; his monotheism is not a subjective, spiritual, individual philosophy. It is the inseparable support of unity of races, unity of classes and equity, every person according to his share and right, that is, the deterministic supra-structure of monotheism is not realized simply with the word; the sword must accompany the message.

It is because of this that Abu Dharr releases his material personal life, because a person who fights the hunger of others must accept his own hunger and that person can give liberty to his society who has passed through his own liberation, and calls for 'revolutionary devotion' which is Islamic austerity and the austerity of 'Ali, so that people would be provided with materiality and economic equallty, not a Christian or Buddha like Sufi austerity.

It was as this that this revolutionary religion, this 'both this world and the next', the religion of neither weakness nor monasticism nor deprivation nor alienation from nature and 'Last-Day-toxication' of human beings in nature, was a religion 'making the human being sacred in nature', 'vice gerent of God in the material world'! His leader, and before all others, his Prophet, was

living in the mosque, the House of God-people: Muhammad, 'Ali, and the Saffah Companions: Salmans and Abu Dharrs.

And Abu Dharr himself could be found under a covered porch (saffah) in the corner of the mosque at the heighth of success; he had become one of the most intimate friends of the Holy Prophet. Whenever he was not in a group, the Prophet would ask him; whenever there was [a group], he would turn to him in the midst of speaking Under the leadership of the Prophet, in the Battle of Tabuk when the soldiers, with difficulty, must pass through the burning northern desert to reach the borders of [eastern] Rome, Abu Dharrfell behind. His skinny camel stopped He freed him under the rain of fire and set off alone! He found some water; he took it to give it to his 'friend' who was also, doubtlessly, suffering from thirst in such a desert The Prophet and the mujahids saw that an unclean point was moving forward in the depths of the fiery desert. Little by little they sensed that it is a human being! 'Who is it? Walking and in such a flaming desert, alone, at that?

The Prophet, with an ardency overflowing with desire, cried out, "Would that it be Abu Dharr!" An hour passed. It was Abu Dharr. When he reached the mujahids, he fell from thirst and exhaustion.

"You are carrying water and you are thirsty, Abu Dharr?" [the Prophet asked] "I thought, in such a desert and, under such a sun, you ..." [Abu Dharr replied].

"May God bless Abu Dharr! He walks alone, dies alone and will be resurrected alone!" [the Prophet said].

Part Four

These days passed and the Prophet passed away. Suddenly, 'the winds which had been enslaved', were released on all sides and 'Ali, the embodiment of the spirit of this Revolution, was isolated in his house as a sign that justice is once again separated from religion: as a sign that the masses once again must leave the scene and religion is once again used exclusively by the elite clergymen, aristocrats and rulers and it is because of this that Ali and those in his parameters: Abu Dharr, a man from the wilderness; Bilal, a stranger without anyone or any work, who was an Ethiopian slave; Salman, a non-Arab who was a freed slave; Suhayb, a foreigner who had come from Greece; Ammar, a half-breed from a black-slave mother and southern-Arab father; Maytham, a poverty-stricken date-seller ... who were the beloved confidants of the leader of the Islamic Revolution, left the scene, and, the Elders of the Companions 'Abd al-Rahman 'Awf, Sa'd ibn Abi Waqas, Khalid ibn Walid, Talha, Zubayr, Abu Bakr, 'Umar and 'Uthman, who were all from among the aristocrats of the Age of Ignorance, took the leadership of the Governent in hand, came to dominate society and brought a closed political group into being.

This strong and unexpected inclination of Islam to the right, which began with a coup d'etat-like election in Thaqifah during the time of Abu Bakr, only had a political aspect, and during the time of 'Umar, it showed its economic visage by classifying Muslims according to the receipt of government wages. It even classified the wives of the Holy Prophet into two scales, depending upon their class before marriage, free or slave! at which the wives of the Prophet, who had been free women, objected and they re-fused to accept the privilege.

But during the regime of 'Uthman, this inclination [to the right] reached its peak point society became categorized; aristocrats took absolute control of the rule; the conquests of Islam in the East and the West, which included economic resources, spoils of war, as well as political and many administrative positions, from Transoxiana of Iran until North Africa, were placed at the disposal of the regime in Madinah; the Companions of the Prophet, mujahids, Emigrants and Helpers were turned from being revolutionary-ideological partisans into being politicians and figures of power and wealth; a class of rulers was created from those who were generally pious, poor, committed, strugglers, a class of new bourgeoisie was formed from the flood of wealth in the form of war spoils, the poor rate (zakat) and the jiziyah[the tax of non-Muslims living under Islamic protection] of millions of Muslims and revolutionary-ideological partisans into being politicians and leaders of power and wealth; a class of rulers was created from those who were generally pious, poor, committed, strugglers; a class of new bourgeoisie was formed from the flood of wealth in the form of war sDoils. the Door-rate (zakat) of Muslims and the taxes of non-Muslims and kafirs slide downwards towards 'poor' Madinah, which not only changed Islamic Madinah, the Muslim ummah and the mujahids of the Battles of Badr and Uhud, but, the contents and social orientation of Islam [as well], and, as a result, religious perception. It changed Islam from the form of a' re-volutionary ideology' into the form of a 'government religion'. This curve, which at Thaqifah had deviated to the right, in less than a quarter of a century (that same quarter of a century when 'Ali had been isolated in his home, the determinations of politics, during these years when the history of Islam was being formed, obliged him to do agricultural work in Yanba', or in his home to turn to collect the Quran, with

which he was also concerned that it not be altered), reached the point that the outstanding political and intellectual visages of Islam were Mu'awiyah [governor during the time of the first few caliphs] who was independent, Marwan Hakam, who was an exile of the Prophet, and Ka'b al-Ahbar, a Jewish rabbi who had recently turned to Islam and become a clergyman of Islam, 'Uthman, 'the Prophet's caliph', would ask him (Ka'b) to give commentaries upon the Holy Quran; ['Uthman] considered 'Ali and Abu Dharr's commentaries incorrect!

'Uthman, in order to justify his new political and economic system, which was a fake copy of the rule of the King of Iran and the Caesar of Rome, did not make any efforts to deceive, perhaps for this reason that at that time, such an act would not be effective because the people had seen what an Islamic rule is with their own eyes and also because 'Uthman's work was more shameful than to be able to try to justify it as being Islamic.

'Uthman is the inventor of a list of innovations (bid'ah) which appear for the first time' in Islam. For the first time, the leader becomes a palace resident; for the first time, he arranges for official security guards; for the first time, special courtiers are found; for the first time, he has a chamberlain; for the first time, the relation between the common masses of the people and the caliph finds an intermediator; for the first time, the public treasury is placed at the disposal of the caliph and the keeper of the keys goes to the mosque and announces to the people, who are the owners of the public treasury, that, "As the Caliph is interferring, I will give the keys back to you. I resign. Do what you want"; for the first time, a political prison is found; for the first time, a Muslim is under survelliance because he attacked the method of the caliph or his agents; for the first time, political exile appears; for the first time, a human being is tortured by the rule ('Abdallah ibn Mas'ud); for the first time, the Holy Quran is used as a means to politically deceive the people; for the first time, the rulers are given a free rein over the fate of the people and they exonerate themselves from any legal and Islamic responsibility; for the first time, tribal and kinship ties become a ladder for political and social progression; for the first time, high positions are monopolized and are held in exclusiveness for the members of the political bond which is affiliated to the caliph; and in order to gain position, the criteria of Islam and piety give way to kinship and politics; for the first time, exploitation of classes, contradiction, discriminatlon, capitalism (kinz), aristocracy, ignorant values, tribal spirit, old age, wealth, race, extraction, personality-worship and tribal tendencies prevail over Islamic brotherhood and spiritual values and social equality.

Economic privileges succeed over piety, a background of jihad, nearness to the Prophet, knowledge of the Quran and individual merit; and the spirit of rule triumphed over leadership, Imamate, a conservative system over a revolutionary movement; the seeking of the exclusiveness of religion, humanity, economics and politics over the mas inclined Islamic equality, seeking and liberation, in the midst of which is an obscure man, having even the same responsibility in the political fate of society and the same right to interfer as the person of the caliph; in the same rank as the great Companions, but, in general, games of compromise [succeed] over longing for the truth; politics over struggle; Islamic slogans over Islamic truths; the Elder Companions over the believers; class over ummah; the house Of the caliphate over the mosque; tribal aristocracy over human dignity; the old ignorance over the new revolution; innovation over Tradition and finally, the family of Abu Sufyan over the family of Muhammad.

As a result, 'Ali was disarmed! and Abu Dharr, who suffered after sorrow fully accepting the defeat of 'Ali in the election of Abu Bakr and the designation of 'Umar, has come again, he can no longer remain silent now when everything has changed: despotism, gold and deception, this omnious tatblith or trinity, in the white dress of the Prophet's caliph, behind the beautiful guise of monotheism, are victorious over the people, who are the continuing sacrifices to this trinity.

The value of what Abu Dharr did is not just that when confronted by false hood, he defended truth; wben confronted by kufr, religion; when confronted by usurpation, rights and the rightful,; and, finally, when confronted by deviation, the right way; rather, that which gives him an outstanding and special visage among all of the revolution ary and mujahid visages, was the exact and clear orientation which he selected in his struggle. It was because of this that he, with a correct evaluation, discovered the major causes of all deviations; and the fact that he showed what this kufr, this right and this deviation is and from what?

In his struggle, he did not lean on unclear phrases, minor slogans, subjective issues, needs, anguishes and the idealistic, imagination, worshipping goals of the philosophical, scholarly, ethical, theological, polemically suprastructural, deviational and subjective, intellectual sensitivities and feelings of scholars, gnostics, jurisprudents and heologians which later polarized all conflicts and struggles in Islamic society to those areas so that the two main slogans of 'imamate' and 'justice' depart from thoughts.

He did not take effects in place of causes. He showed 'from where one must begin'; he made it clear what the sharp edge of struggle should be made attentive to; he taught that deviated conflicts and the mistaken takings of incidentals pulls the struggle with the enemy to those exact scenes which the enemy wants, so that even if victory be attained, no pain will be healed and the enemy will not be harmed.

He determined the main line of his struggle to be a struggle with class discrimination in order to establish justice. As these two slogans are so extensive that the caliphate can also announce them and by means of the propagation facilities of the caliphate, that is, pulpits and mihrabs, and so justify and exigize them through the propagator agents of the official and ruling Islam, transmitters of the Traditions, propagators, preachers, commentators, jurisprudents and scholars, that they no longer have any effects, Abu Dharr, as a lesson to those who like him make efforts to have their Islam be the Muhammad-like Islam of 'Ali, returned to the Quran. He took his battle cry from it.

Those who treasure up (kinz) gold and silver and do not expend (infaq) them in the Way of God, give them the good tidings of a painful chastisement, the day they shall be heated in the fire of hell and therewith, their foreheads and their sides and their backs shall be branded. 'This is the thing you have treasured up for yourselves; therefore taste you now what you were treasuring!'(9:34-35)

Kinz is Arabic for treasure and means the 'storing up of capital'. Gold and silver are manifestations of capitalism. Infaq, 'the act of spending', comes from nafaq meaning break and has been derived from the if'al form of the verb, giving the opposite meaning of the first, that is, eliminating and negating a break in something. It is clear that what is meant here is a crack, a break in society which is made by capitalism and economic exploitation. What is meant is a class break or clevage, uneveness and the unsymmetrical or disproportionate level of social life.

Part Five

The Way of God in the language of Islam, not Muslims, means the way of the people. Why? Because in all verses which speak of social issues and of social positioning (not ideological positioning), Allab and the masses or people (nas) are in the same front. The God of Islam has no

particular vow, sacrifice, incense or frankincense for Himself. That which is for the masses and for society (not that which is for an individual) becomes particular to God and for God. "If you lend God a good loan ... (64:17) means, "If you give the people a good loan ..." Mal Allah, bayt Allah and lilah are all objectively realized in society, the property of the people, the house of the people ("The first House established for the people was that at blessed Bekka [Makkah]." (3:96), that is the Ka'bah and for the people, because the people are of the family of God. Those who do not see things this way and for whom it is difficult to accept such a belief, are under the influence of a Divine world view and descriptive forms which other religions have offered of their deity. The struggle begins.

Abu Dharr is in the position of a close and intimate Companion of the Prophet, with the license which the Prophet himself gave him: "A person who so learned knowledge that his breast was overflowing with it." "The blue sky never cast a shadow upon and the dark earth never saw, a more truthful man than Abu Dharr." "The modesty and piety of Abu Dharr resembles that of Jesus, son of Mary." "Abu Dharr is more famous in the heavens, than the earth."

"Abu Dharr, upon this earth, in this society, walks alone, dies alone and, in the wilderness of Judgment Day, when the cemeteries arise, and group by group, the corpses arise, Abu Dharr will be resurrected in a corner of the wilderness, alone, and will join the scene!"

He would sit in a mosque and, one after another, would recite verses for the people which were abandoned in practice; issues from the Quran or the customs of the Prophet which are no longer relevant and whose relevancy brings about difficulties and headaches.

The discussion of the day, in the age of 'Uthman, is the compilation of the Quran, the arrangement of the Quran, the correcting of the hand-written copies of the Quran, the preparation of one main, correct copy of the Quran and unending discussions of recitation, orthigraphy, placing vowels and diacritical points, reading and chanting and conflicts, disturbances, sensitivities, objections and acceptances ..., Abu Dharr brought up the discussion of 'treasuring up' (kinz) from the Quran. Moment after moment, he recited the verse of kinz and the first part of the same verse: "O believers, many of the rabbis and monks indeed consume the goods of the people in vanity and bar God's Way." (9:34)

Taking this front caused disturbances. The caliph himself was occupied with gathering and compiling the Quran; those committed to the Quran were grateful to him.

The remembrance of the Quran would bring a blessed memory of the caliphate. And the Quran of Abu Dharr, resulting in pessimism, harshness, criticism, stimulation, attack and condemnation of the caliphate, caused the voice of the caliph's system to object.

"Abu Dharr! Does the Quran only have this verse of 'the clergymen consuming the property of the people' and this verse of 'treasuring up'? "

And Abu Dharr knew that every age has its anguish and every generation, a slogan. Whosoever recognizes that the Quran is not just 'a sacred thing', but that it is a light and a guidance, must rely upon the verses of the day [the verses relevant to the people of a particular time]. Abu Dharr answered, "How strange! Does the caliph forbid me to recite the Quran?"

Now, revelation, belief in monotheism, idol worship, resurrection, survival of the spirit and the prophethood of Muhammad, are no longer relevant because these issues have all been solved; today's issue is contradiction and class discrimination, so after this verse, which was a verse of the day, he began to recall the customs of the Prophet, to speak about the words of the Prophet and that, again, based upon what was relevant to society:

Months passed and no smoke arose from the home of the Holy Prophet." "The food most often in the house of the Prophet of God was water and dates." "Half of the floor of the Prophet's house was carpeted with sand." "He tested himself with hunger by often tying a stone around his stomach so he could bear the causticity of hunger." "His clothes and his food and his house gave solace to we Saffah Companions of the mosque. We had no family or home, and, most often, hungry, every night a group of us would eat with him. When he had cooked food in his home, he would invite us to eat with him and this food was sabus, a dough cooked from barley flour and dates." "He would say, 'No money was hoarded except that it becomes a fire for its owner.' The wives of the Prophet of God would often moan and complain of the hard ship and hunger. He contracted with them, 'Either desire this world and divorce or me and poverty.' "The Prophet of God's beloved daughter worked and suffered hunger, yet he did not accept the request of'Ali and his daughter, who were the most beloved creatures of God, in his opinion, to give them a servant. He cried for Zahra's [Fatimah's] poverty but he did not give her ne dinar help."

It is clear that rapidly, question, question, question in thoughts: Then why is the caliph 'Uthman wearing a fur coat? Why is the colorful spread in the caliph's palace filled with the most delectable foods? Then why was the legacy of Abd al-Rahman 'Awf, who was the head of the Council to elect the caliph and who made 'Uthman caliph, when piled on top of each other, like a mountain which hid the caliph, who was upon the pulpit, from the people, who were sitting on the ground.

His gold bullion was broken with an axe to divide up the inheritance. Then why does Zubayr, who was a member of the caliphate council, have a thousand slaves who work for him and they daily give him their wages? Then why does Mu'awiyah, a family member [of the caliph] and the governor of the caliphate in Damascus, build a Green Palace? Why are those who are around him, whoever confirms him, flatterers, poets, 'ulama' and Companions, given fairy-tale gifts? And, then, why does 'Uthman, who promised to follow the Book of God and the Traditions of the Prophet, and the Shaykans [Abu Bakr and 'Umar] method, only follow the traditions of the Caesars and Kings?

Then, why? Then, why?

Day by day, aristocracy, exploitation, extravagance, poverty, distance and social and class breaks or cracks became more and the propagation of Abu Dharr grew more extensive causing the abased and the exploited to become more agitated. The hungry learned from Abu Dharr that their poverty was not God's Will, written upon the foreheads and the rule of fate and destiny of heaven; the cause is only kinz (hoarding of capital).

What must be done?

With the austere and pious Abu Dharr, nothing! Neither does he 'have' to threaten him: 'We will take it! ' nor does he 'want' to tempt him: 'We give! ' And his wife is Umm Dharr; she is also one of the Companions of the Holy Prophet. She helps her husband to bear the hardships, asceticism and poverty which a struggling and responsible human being must bear, because during that age when there was Islam, a woman was not yet, 'the weak one'.

Danger sharpened its teeth in the depths of Madinah. The abased, who submitted to the sacred visages of the Emigrants and the Elder Companions of the Prophet, who now rule, and bore their own anguish and the others' deviation, had become bold. 'Uthman sensed the danger.

What to do? Madinah still remembers the Prophetand the people know Abu Dharr.

He exiled him to Damascus, to Mu'awiyah. From the beginning, the people of Damascus learned Islam from the Bani 'Umayyid. Mu'awiyah has more free rein over Abu Dharr. In Damascus,

Mu'awiyah had, by imitating the Romans, built a more aristocratic life than 'Uthman. Discrimination, impurity, oppression and violation of the Islamic system was more evident and more brazen. It was at this time that, with the help of the Roman and Iranian architects, Mu'awiyah was building the 'Green Palace'. This was the first monarchial palace, pompous and beautiful. Mu'awiyah had so set his heart on completing it that he would, most often, be present to supervise his orkers and masons and Abu Dharr would also appear everyday and would cry out: "O Mu'awiyah, if you build this palace with your own money, it is extravagance and if it is with the people's money, it is treason!" And he who was a mature and patient politician would bear it as he thought as to find a solution.

One day, Mu'awiyah invited Abu Dharr to his home. He went beyond the limits of respect and kindness, but Abu Dharr did not reduce his harsh visage or his angry tone in the least bit and, finally, the situation reached the point of threats:

Abu Dharr, if I killed one of the Prophet's Companions without 'Uthman's permission, it would be you, but I am obliged to get 'Uthman's permission for your death. Abu Dharr, what you do separates you and, You cause the poor and the lowly people to uprise against us."

And Abu Dharr, in his response, Behave like the customs and behavior of the Prophet of God so that I will leave you alone. Otherwise, if I have but one breath remaining, I will use that one breath to recite a Prophetic Tradition.

The propaganda of Abu Dharr spread. The people of Damascus, who were beginning to think that Islam is the Roman regime which was ruling over them, little by little were finding the real visage of Islam. The uproar of the seeking of justice and freedom alongside religious faith was arising in hearts and the abased, who had been accepting the justification of poverty and abasement through rdigion, for the first time, were learning from Abu Dharr that, "Whenever poverty enters through a door, religion leaves by another."

The mosque was still the home of God, the people and Abu Dharrs and the base of struggle. Mu'awiyah had no control over it. It was after the death of 'Ali that mosques were emptied of God and the family of God, the people, and became the base for the caliphate and a trap used by dergymen of the caliphate! The abased surrounded him with great ardency and hope. He spoke of the truths which were intermingled with right; an Islam which was accompanied by justice; a God Who also thought about bread for the people and Who was teaching the people. In place of narcosis, he stimulated them and threatened the uncompleted Green Palace's destruction.

Mu'awiyah sent Abu Dharr to the jihad in Cyprus. If he was victorious, it could be an honor and victory for Muawiyah and a respect which would be an 'honor' for Islam! and if Abu Dharr were killed, Mu'awiyah would be relieved of any of his harm without his hands being polluted in his blood. Because of [these kinds of misuses of jihad], Shi'ism later issued an edict, "Jihad", without the leader ship of the real and just Imam is prohibited." But Abu Dharr returned healthy and, without hesitation, went from the front to the mosque and began his work!

Mu'awiyah knew Abu Dharr, knew the extent to which he thought about the freedom of slaves and satiating the hungry. He assigned a slave, "Take this bag of gold to Abu Dharr and if you succeed in having him take it, you are free ! " The slave went to Abu Dharr. Abu Dharr refused and the slave insisted, cried and begged and the answer of Abu Dharr was only, "No! " Finally he said, "O Abu Dharr, may God bless you. Take this money because my freedom is in giving this money to you." Abu Dharr, without hesitation, said, "Yea. But my enslavement is in taking this money from you!"

Part Six

No tricks would work against this obstinate, brazen, pious and conscious man. Only coercion remained. He wrote to 'Uthman: If you need Damascus, take Abu Dharr away from here because complexes are swelling, the heads of wounds have opened up and an explosion is near. 'Uthman ordered him to be sent to Madinah.

They placed him in a wooden packsaddle on a camel's back and engaged several savage slaves to take him back to Madinah. Mu'awiyah ordered that no stops be made along the way, from Damascus to Madinah.

The rider nears Madinah, tired and wounded; beside the city, he saw 'Ali on Mt. Sala' and beside him, 'Uthman and several other people. From a distance he cried out, "I give glad tidings to Madinah of a great and endless rebellion."

The Caliph ordered no one to follow a religious edict from Abu Dharr but religious edicts were issued, one after another, by Abu Dharr. That which he had seen in Damascus, had made him more anxious and more brazen in struggle. 'Abd al-Rahman 'Awf, the head of the caliphate council of 'Umar, died and his heritage, which was an abundance of gold and silver, was piled up before 'Uthman. Abu Dharr heard that 'Uthman had said, "Abd al-Rahman is blessed by God that he lived well and when he died he left behind all of this wealth."

Abu Dharr agitated and enflamed, invaded 'Uthman's house alone. On the way, he found a camel's bone. He picked it up and took it. He cried out to 'Uthman, "You say that God has blessed a man who has died and left all of this gold and silver behind?"

'Uthman, softly, replied, "Abu Dharr, does a person who has paid his zakat have other [religious] obligations, as well?"

Abu Dharr recited the verse of kinz and said, "The problem here is not zakat; the problem is with anyone who hoards gold and silver and does not give it upon the Way of God."

Ka'b al-Ahbar, a clergyman, formerly Jewish, who was sitting beside 'Uthman, said, "This verse relates to the 'people of the Book' (Jews and Christians); it does not relate to Muslims."

Abu Dharr cried out at him, "Son of a Jew! You want to teach our religion to us? May your mother mourn for you!" 'Uthman said, "If a man has paid his zakat and builds a palace, one brick of gold and one brick of silver there is no blame." Then he turned to Ka'b and asked him his opinion and Ka'b expressed the opinion that, "Yes, your majesty. That's the way it is!" Abu Dharr attacked him.

Ka'b, out of fear, hid behind 'Uthman and placed himself in the refuge of the Caliph. The scene is complete! The scene of the drama of all of history! On one side, gold, coercion and the ruling religion in the visages of 'Abd al-Rahman, 'Uthman and Ka'b al Ahbar, and how exact and accurate! The principle, gold, coercion its supporter and religion, hidden behind coercion, its justifier. Confronting it, Abu Dharr, the sacrifice of exploitation, despotism and deception, the manifestation of the religion condemned by history and the oppressed class of history, God and the people!

Abu Dharr, alone, disarmed, oppressed, with all of this, responsible and an assailant, takes Ka'b from the refuge of coercion, and with the camel's bone, pounded him so hard on the head that blood began to flow.

'Uthman said, "How tiresome you have become, Abu Dharr; leave us."

Abu Dharr said, "I am fed up with seeing you. Where should I go?"

"To Rabadah."

Marwan Hakam, an exile of the Prophet, was assigned to exile Abu Dharr. 'Ali heard of the affair. He moaned. He took Hasan, Husayn and 'Aqil and they came to see him off. Marwan stood before 'Ali, "The Caliph has prohibited the seeing-off of Abu Dharr." 'Ali, with a whip, by-passed him, and went with Abu Dharr till Rabadhah.

Rabadhah, a burning wilderness without water or cultivation, along the way of pilgrims; which, other than at the time of the hajj, becomes empty and silent. There he set up his torn tent and he met his needs with the few goats he had.

Months passed. Poverty was increasing and hunger, more brazen. One by one, his goats died and he and his family faced death in the loneliness of the wilderness.

His daughter died. He bore it patiently and considered it to have been upon the Way of God. A little later, the wolf of hunger attacked his son. He sensed responsibility. He went to Madinah and sought his wages, which had been cut off, from 'Uthman. 'Uthman did not answer him. He returned empty handed. His son's corpse was cold. He buried him with his own hands.

Abu Dharr and Umm Dharr remained alone. Poverty, hunger and decrepitude had greatly weakened Abu Dharr's body. One day he felt he had come to the end of his strength. Hunger bothered him. He said to Umm Dharr, "Arise. Perhaps in this wilderness we will find some blades of grass to quiet our hunger a bit. Woman and man, for a great distance, from the parameters of the tent, searched and found nothing. Upon their return, Abu Dharr lost his strength. The sign of death showed itself in his face. Umm Dharr understood and, anxiouslv, asked, "What is happening to you, Abu Dharr?"

"Separation is near! Leave my corpse on the way and ask wayfarers to help you bury me."

"The hajjis have gone and there are no wayfarers." "It can't be. Get up and go on the hill. Some people will come for my death."

Umm Dharr, from the top of the hill, saw three riders who were riding at a distance. She signaled to them. They came close.

"May God bless you. A man is dying here. Help me bury him and receive your reward from God."

"Who is he?"

"Abu Dharr."

"The friend of the Prophet?"

"Yea."

"May my mother and father be sacrificed for you O Abu Dharr! "

They stood before him. He was still alive. He requested of them, "Any of you who are messengers of the government, spies or military personnel, do not bury me. If my wife or I had a cloth for my shroud, there would be no need."

Only a youth from among the Helpers who had a non-government profession said, "I have this cloth with me which my mother wove." Abu Dharr prayed for him and said, "Shroud me with that."

His mind at rest, everything was coming to an end. He closed his eyes and never opened them again. The wayfarers buried him under the hot sands of Rabadah. The young Helper stood beside his grave, whispering under his breath, "The Prophet of God stated it well!"

He walks alone, dies alone and will be resurrected alone!

"When?"

"On the arising of the Day of Resurrection."

"And, also, in the arising of every era and in the midst of every generation."

And now, once again it is Abu Dharr who, among all of the visages buried in this shoreless cemetery of history, in our age and among us, will be resurrected alone."